

### REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Claims 8-9, 11-12, 16 and 19-20 were rejected in the Final Office Action under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Mullee (U.S. Patent No. 6,306,564). Applicants amend claim 8 and respectfully request reconsideration of the rejection. Claims 2-3, 5-6, 15 and 17-18 remain withdrawn from consideration.

Applicants thank the Examiner for the courtesy extended to the Applicants' attorney during the telephone interview conducted on January 27, 2009. As discussed during the interview, Claim 8 is now amended to recite that the high-pressure processing apparatus includes a high-pressure region and a normal pressure region. Further, Claim 8 recites that the pressure vessels and the mixing sections are positioned in the high-pressure region, and that the blending means are positioned in the normal pressure region. Support for this amendment is found in paragraphs [0011] and [0055] of the Publication of the present Application, as well as in Fig. 2. Because the blending means are disposed in the normal pressure region, the number of components to be disposed in the high-pressure region is beneficially reduced, as described in paragraph [0055] of the Publication. The above limitations of the amended Claim 8 are not disclosed in Mullee.

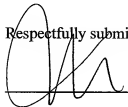
Specifically, in Mullee, the entire loop 116, 118, including the solvent chambers 44, 46 and the line 43, are located within the high-pressure region, the high pressure being generated by the pump 92. See, Mullee, Fig. 2.

Therefore, the limitations of Claim 8 requiring that the apparatus includes a high-pressure region and a normal pressure region and that the blending means are positioned in the normal pressure region are not disclosed in Mullee, and hence, Claim 8, as amended, is allowable over the cited prior art. Claims 9, 11-12, 16 and 19-20 depend from Claim 8. Therefore, Claims 9,

11-12, 16 and 19-20 are allowable at least for the same reasons as Claim 8 and further on their own merits. Favorable reconsideration of the rejection is respectfully requested.

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